

Record made August 19, 1939 in the office of the Aycock & Lindsey turpentine camp, Cross City, Florida. [Textual Transcription]

(Record made August 19, 1939 in the office of the Aycock & Lindsey turpentine camp, Cross City, Florida. Stetson Kennedy interviewer; Robert Cook, operator)

RECORD 8

3528

Item:

- 1) Continued: Berry Johnson's description of methods of killing Joe Mows: "If a feller joins you in a skin game, and knows you've got a Joe Mow, he can throw salt on you once or twice and maybe kill the power of your Joe Mow. A toad carried in the pocket is even better than salt to kill Joe Mows."
- 2) He believes in witches: "What your eyes see, your heart is bliged to believe. You can't see witches; only where they've been. The only way to see a witch is to catch one. Then to destroy them they must be burned or blinded."
- 3) He has seen witches in West Florida, but not near Cross City. "But witches are there; bound to be, so many bad and wicked people died." He doesn't recognize witches as former acquaintances; doesn't look at them long enough. "Witches can't do nobody no harm; they can come back and bother you, but that's all. They can sure make you hurt yourself, though."

(The remainder of the record is not itemized, as it is in narrative form.)

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Has heard of "buzzard grease," but doesn't know what it is. Never been able to tell why people tie dimes on strings around their necks— if he has a dime he spends it. "Some people wear nutmegs around their necks for different ailments—I don't believe in no sicha junk as that." Nutmeg worn like that is supposed to be good for fluttering heart. He has heard that carrying a potatoe in your pocket will cure rheumatism. He doesn't think "any sich junk as that is much benefit." He takes whatever medicines are recommended and that he can get and that's any good. Believes in trying out medicines for himself.

"The way to make your wife be true to you is to first be true to her." He doesn't have a wife; he had one, but she is not with him now, so she isn't his. He is currently "kinda sparkin round." "I like all women; I love em all; there's no sicha thing as a bad woman—they're all good.

"Some women wear dimes on a string around their ankles to keep from bein cunjervated; but it kaint keep em from bein cunjervated. I wears a little leather strap around my wrist to keep the cramps out of my arm; thas good, the doctor says so.

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RECORD 8

"I believes in everything from a little ghost to a big un. Even the Bible says there is evil spirits. I keeps up with the Bible on the ghosts; Been keeping up with it. Amen. You said it. Haven't seen any ghosts in this camp, but has passed where they've been. Been through the hot steam of em.

"There ain't but one way to keep ghostes from harmin ya: run for home as hard as you can make it. If I'm alone they bother me, but if I'm with somebody I don't be oneasy. I don't never go near no graveyards; the graveyards is made for the dead.

REVERSE

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"The Bible says there aint but two: a saint or a sinner. These preachers roun here with two wives aint nothin but a hyprocy. The people in Georgia is more religious than the people in Florida because in Florida when you are down and out and haven't got no money you just can't eat. But in Georgia you can always get people to look out for you.

"I likes everything almost scusin old dry black eyed peas and white bacon, which wasn't made for people to eat. I remembers some songs bout possums:

'Possum up de simmon tree, Eat all de simmons he could see; Coon on de ground, Say, 'Shake dem simmons down.'

"Joe Mows are not much good unless you pay 75 or 100 dollars for them. I believes most everything strange thet I hears, cause the people in this world is wise; they can do most everything scusin puttin breath into a man. You can kill a man, but you kaint bring im back, an you kaint keep im from dyin.

"Long time ago I bought a \$20 lodestone from Atlanta. I bought a Joe Mow from New Orleans what cost me \$100. I won't tell you where I bought it from. It made me win thousands of dollars; I didn't care no more for sharks in a game than I did for workin men.

"I haven't got married cause I'm not lookin for a woman; I'm lookin for a wife, an ta git a wife, ya hafta ask the Lord. Of course some men be in luck an git good wives without askin the Lord for em. I'll do anything in this world for my children, cept one thing: I won't die for em. Thas talkin from the heart, not the mouth. I wouldn't lay down my life for anybody in the world an know it; I know how this world is, an I don't know nothin bout the other one."

END OF RECORD